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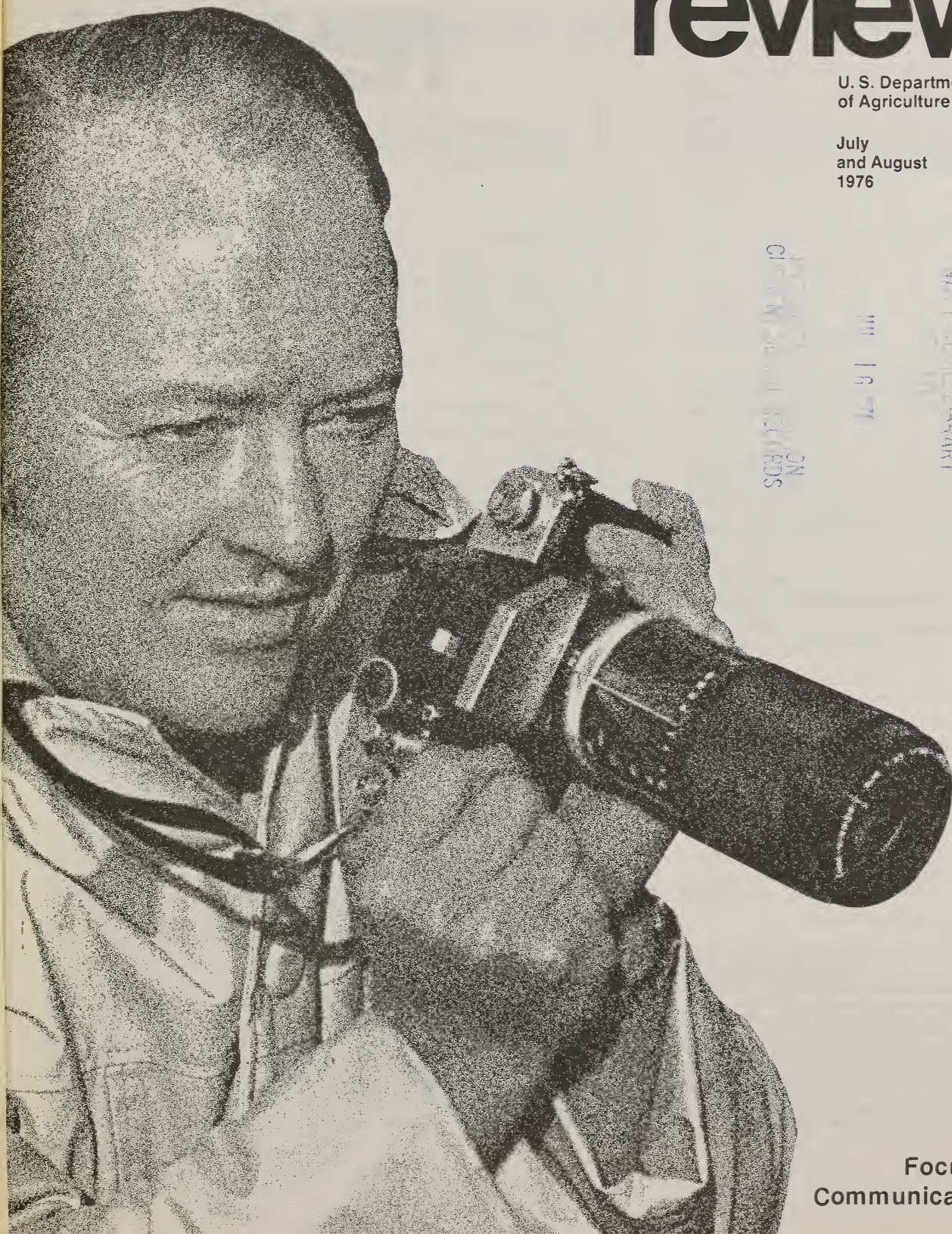
# EXTENSION SERVICE review

U. S. Department  
of Agriculture

July  
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1976

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Focus on  
Communications



*The Extension Service Review is for Extension educators—in County, State, and USDA Extension agencies — to help people learn how to use the newest research findings to bring about a more abundant life for themselves and their communities.*

**EARL L. BUTZ**  
Secretary of Agriculture

**EDWIN L. KIRBY**, Administrator  
Extension Service

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*Cover photo:*

*Earl Otis, Extension information specialist, Puyallup, Wash., snaps a photo for the 1976 Yearbook of Agriculture. (See feature story, p. 3)*

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# EXTENSION SERVICE review

*Official bi-monthly publication of Cooperative Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture and State Land-Grant Colleges and Universities cooperating.*

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## Extension educates for safety

Education is what the Extension Service is all about. "Educate for Safety"—the theme of National Farm Safety Week—is a natural for Extension workers. The week is July 25-31 this year.

Education is a continuing process, and a key to the safe production of food and fiber crops. Here's a special opportunity for Extension workers to think about expanding their safety education programs, or starting new ones for the farmers and farm families we serve.

We can set up safety programs through local farm organizations, homemakers' clubs, commodity groups, implement dealers, and others. And don't forget the 4-H'ers!

The National Safety Council recommends: Read and heed instruction manuals and product labels. Be informed on what to do in case of emergencies such as severe weather, fire, poisoning, injuries, and drowning. Learn first aid and resuscitation methods. Teach children what is safe and unsafe, and how to deal with hazards and risky situations. Make sure they learn how to swim.

Learn as much as possible about safety. Educate yourself, your family and the farmers you work with. Your safety education program can save lives, time, and money—*William Carnahan*

# Area communication specialists expand your audience

by  
Ovid Bay  
*Director of Information  
Extension Service, USDA*

Although "area subject matter specialists," are a familiar part of most state programs, "area communications specialists" are relatively scarce on the Extension scene. Today more and more states are getting great support from this new breed of communications specialist.

The pattern of operation varies from state to state. Some area communications specialists use the conventional university researchers and Extension specialists as key resource people. Others utilize local county agents, covering local events as part of their service. Let's look at how some area communications specialists are supporting Extension programs:

## ARIZONA

I spent a day trying to keep up with Robert (Bob) Halvorson,



5:30 a.m.: Bob Halvorson, right, on KTAR radio with Johnnie Linn for 10 minutes.

Phoenix, who broke into his assignment as an "information county agent" 20 years ago when handling the farm page for the Sunday edition of the *Arizona Republic*. Local radio stations started asking Bob "for equal treatment" and he started feeding them material on tape. Television followed.

Bob is on three TV channels live 5 days each week and on three radio stations 6 days a week plus one TV film spot. This calls for 27 miles of travel each day and some close timing each morning. He has keys to all of the major stations and the schedule goes like this:

5:25 a.m.—begin the day with phone message to KJJJ radio.

5:30 a.m.—on KTAR radio with Johnnie Linn for 10 minutes. Discussion included the county fair and irrigation farmers' fuel problems. Headed for next station.

5:45 a.m.—on 7 minutes at KOOL with Len Ingedrigtsen. Topic covered: winter pruning. Drove back to KTAR-TV.

6:00 to 6:25 a.m.—after shaving and a cup of coffee, getting ready at KTAR-TV for 5 minutes in the middle of the *TODAY* morning show. (Worth about \$30,000 a week if you bought the space.) KTAR-TV gives Extension Service this 5 minutes of local programming, furnishes Bob 16mm color film as needed, and processes it for him. This morning's program included a 30-second piece of film on adjusting a combine. Film supplied Bob is the "tail ends" from 400-foot segments not completely used by the regular news team on KTAR-TV. Bob can also use this film on other stations after he uses it at KTAR.

7:00 a.m.—taped 1½ minutes to be a part of the 30-minute daily news at 8:00 a.m.

7:15 a.m.—to coffee shop for breakfast.

9:00 a.m.—to KOOL-TV to tape 9½ minutes for use the next morning on their 5:20 a.m. farm program. This channel is also picked up in the Tucson area and the program goes to other cities in Arizona on CA-TV.

10:00 a.m.—to KPHO-TV for a 6-minute interview which is used on an irregular schedule at 11:50 a.m.

11:00 a.m.—back to KOOL-TV to tape a 4-minute spot for use the next day.

11:30 a.m.—arrives at the Maricopa County Extension office and starts editing film and making visuals for upcoming programs. Bob uses "real things" as props as much as possible. He has a small film library and can put sound on if desired—usually narrates the film as it is shown on TV.

Noon—Lunch.

1 to 3:00 p.m.—to the University





5:45 a.m.: ...quick trip to KOOL radio for 7 minutes live.

of Arizona research plots shooting 16mm film for use on a future TV program. Today's subject is the Buffalo gourd—a native plant with some potential as a livestock feed.

4:00 p.m.—as we dropped the film off for processing at KTAR-TV, I asked Bob, "Is every day like this?" He replied with his Scotsman's twinkle, "No, some days are rather busy!"

Bob attends many night meetings as a reporter, and often as the guest speaker or MC. The stations look upon Halvorson as "their farm reporter" and he is careful to *stress selling of ideas and news* on the air and not just fulfill a role as a press agent for an institution. This is a tight rope to walk and some Extension specialists feel they may get

short changed on credit and visibility with the soft sell approach. But, how many can match 5 minutes on the *TODAY* program?

Linda Loe spends half of her time in the Phoenix area as a home agent and half as an area communications specialist. Linda does a consumer column for local media and short TV features on two stations. She often interviews the staff of consumer agencies for the spots. Loe finds one of the big needs is additional budget for TV visuals and exhibits for meetings.

"When can Extension afford the budget for an area communications specialist?" Three-fourths of the people in Arizona read, watch or listen to the media in the Phoenix area, so we feel the area information

dissemination approach is an effective and practical way to reach our clientele," sums up Gordon Graham, head of Arizona's agricultural communications.

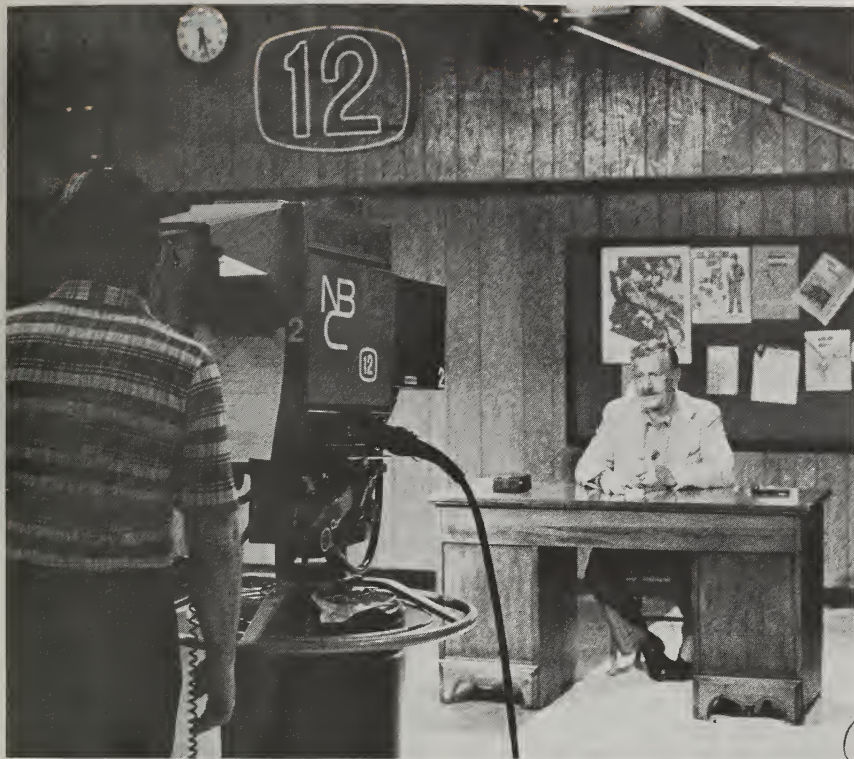
## NEBRASKA

Rollie Graham and the communications crew at Lincoln, Nebraska, face a different situation than Arizona. The University Extension staff is on the east end of the state—a long drive to the North Platte and Scottsbluff areas. And, the farming practices and techniques change from the Corn Belt to the Great Plains—almost two entirely different types of agriculture.

"At two of the stations, North

## EXTENSION SERVICE REVIEW





6:25 a.m.: ready for 5 minutes in the middle of the *TODAY* show on KTAR-TV.

Platte and Scottsbluff (Panhandle), district communications specialists are assigned to help staff prepare educational materials and also work with the media," explains Rollie. "Since there are 38 counties in these two Extension districts, the approach is more like a mini-operation of a state communications office."

Jim Peters at North Platte maintains his own mailing list and includes news releases of research and Extension events and developments. Jim does five radio programs weekly for ten area radio stations; two TV programs weekly on a North Platte station; and takes, develops, prints, and distributes photos for slide and TV programs. He also works with the county agents on their communication problems and helps distribute publications.

Stan Haas has a district assignment at Scottsbluff, with a little different approach. His basic responsibility is in 4-H information while Jim's main effort is in agricultural production. (Home economics infor-

mation is handled from the state office.)

Stan helps develop and coordinate district 4-H specialists' efforts in preparing written, audio and visual materials in support of their 4-H program. He works closely with the media in the Nebraska Panhandle, in publicizing 4-H programs.

## TEXAS

"Texas was probably the first state to test the Area Information Specialist concept when they employed Don Bynum in 1962," said William "Bill" Tedrick, editor and head of the department of agricultural communications at A&M. "Since then we have established five additional positions and changed their name to Area Communications Specialist, a title more in keeping with their multimedia assignments," he continued.

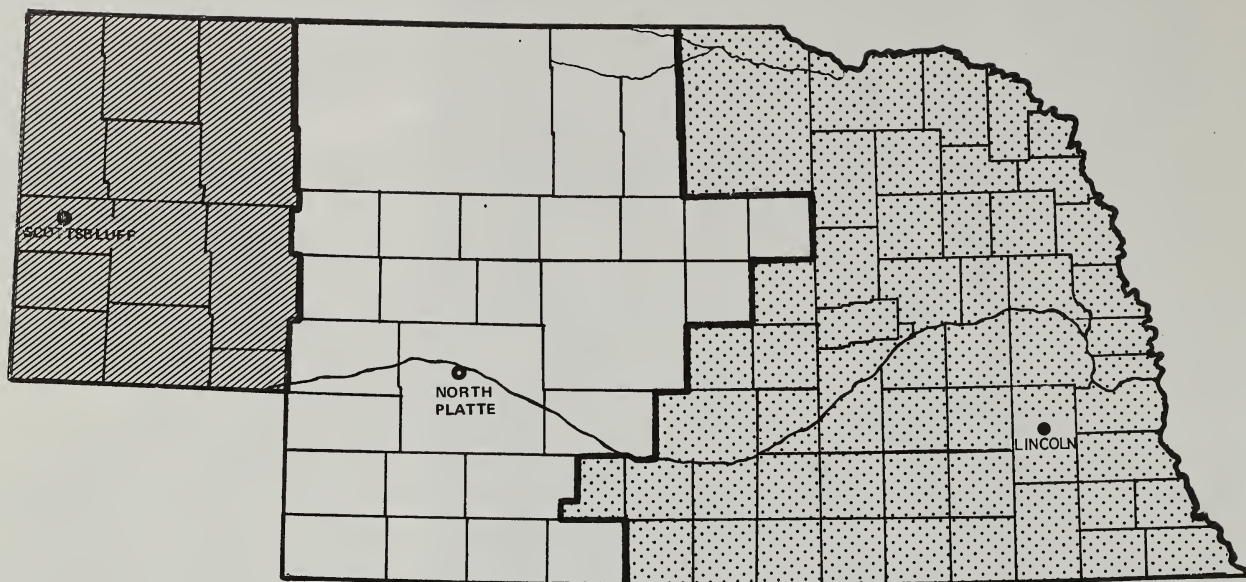
In addition to Don headquartered at San Angelo, Texas has John

Ferguson in the lower Rio Valley at Weslaco, Herb Brevard in East Texas at Overton, Jim O. Jones, at Lubbock serving the Panhandle area, Harold Clark, at Dallas, and Barry Jones at Uvalde. Their goal is to eventually have an area specialist in each of the 14 district Extension offices.

To understand the many advantages of having area communications specialists in Texas, you need to consider the tremendous variation a state that size has in agricultural production. While cotton is being planted in Lower Rio Valley, they may still be harvesting in the Panhandle. Or consider agriculture in the East Texas Piney Forest area as contrasted to valley agriculture at El Paso in Far West Texas. And imagine the variation in between—both east-west and north-south!

Recognizing that state Extension educational or research programs could not adequately serve these contrasting needs without local adaption and programming, a series of Agricultural Research and Extension Centers were proposed. Nine are currently operational with two more in the development stage. These centers do not exactly match the current 14 Extension districts of the state, but at present all but three district offices are or will be located at a Research and Extension Center. A sizable staff is housed at each center to serve the 12 to 20 counties within the district or, in some instances, multi-district area.

The area communications specialists provide communications support to the staff within the assigned districts. They also contribute to state-oriented communications programs by feeding information to the staff at College Station for state-wide distribution or adapt state-oriented information to local needs through rewrites and media contacts.



*Nebraska is divided into three communications areas.*

As might be expected, no two area communications specialists carry out their responsibilities in exactly the same way. Harold Clark located at the Dallas Research and Extension Center serves a highly metropolitan area where the staff conducts conferences and workshops directly with clientele. Harold helps plan, promote and conduct these conferences which have attracted more than 50,000 people over the past 2 years. A major part of his time is spent working directly with the Dallas area media to promote and follow up the conferences. In addition, he works directly with the area Economic Development Program.

By contrast, Don Bynum in San Angelo, John Ferguson at Weslaco and Herb Brevard in East Texas deal with more rural-oriented situations, spending more time assisting the county staff directly with multimedia efforts and consultations.

Jim Jones at Lubbock—the last agricultural stronghold in the state—works with a cadre of competent farm editors and broadcasters and is highly successful in funneling information their way.

All the area specialists handle agriculture, home economics, 4-H/youth and rural development information programs. They report that these multiprogram demands are probably the most taxing and perhaps frustrating aspects of their work.

The Texas area specialists also help determine communications training needs at the district level, assisting with the training programs as they are offered across the state. They are the Extension front line contacts with local leadership with excellent opportunities to report on and interpret the work of the Extension Service and Experiment Station as part of their everyday activities.

## WASHINGTON

The Washington Extension Service office is located in the wheat fields at Pullman—the southeast corner to the state. However, 70 percent of the state's population lives in the 19 western counties on the west side of the Cascade mountains. The major media outlets are here, too.

The weather and crops are also different in this end of the state, and the Western Washington Research & Extension Center at Puyallup serves their research and Extension needs. In 1959, the first area information specialist came to Puyallup to coordinate communications efforts at the center and in the counties. Since 1963, Earl Otis has run the one-person information service. Earl has a lot of personal contact with the media—often they call him—and he has his own mailing lists which he coordinates with the state office of Pullman.

“Western Washington media still receive radio tapes, TV spots, news releases, and features directly from Pullman. However, our area communications specialist is a vital and equal member of our information staff. He is a readily accessible generator of area media material and a reliable source of information for us,” sums up Hugh Cameron, WSU College of Agriculture editor.

This statement could be made about all the area communications specialists as they perform their “different,” but “vital” part of the Extension information effort. □



# Green Star Gardeners learn through videocassettes

*During the winter and early spring of 1976, Vermont and New Hampshire Extension agents offered the Green Star Gardener course in 14 different locations. Using videocassettes as one of the main teaching tools, agents trained some 250 garden leaders, with a potential audience of 10,000 home gardeners.*

A flick of the switch, and Extension specialists Ted Flanagan of Vermont and Otho Wells of New Hampshire appeared on the TV tube showing how to plan a home vegetable garden. After the 15-minute presentation, Extension agent Ray Pestle turned off the TV and opened the meeting for questions and discussion.

Pestle's audience were 30 garden leaders from southern Vermont, who had signed up for the Green Star Gardener training program in

by  
Karin Kristiansson  
Associate Editor  
Multimedia Project Coordinator  
The Extension Service  
University of Vermont

Bellows Falls. After several minutes of discussion, Pestle again turned to the TV sets, and switched on Agronomist Winston Way, with liming and fertilizing advice for the home gardener.

The next evening, Pestle took the equipment and cassettes to Woodstock, Vt., 30 miles north, where another group of garden leaders met for the Green Star Gardener course.

This course was repeated in 12 locations in Vermont and New Hampshire, by six agents. Each agent was a local teacher/leader. With the videocassettes, he was able to bring six top-notch garden

specialists into the classroom with in-depth gardening information. The audience included garden leaders, garden store personnel, vo-ag teachers, and other resource people. They welcomed the Green Star Gardener as a much needed refresher course.

Most of the planning and production of the Green Star Gardener material was done during the summer, fall, and winter of 1975. Patterned after the Master Gardener program in Washington State, the Vermont-New Hampshire project was aimed at garden leaders and experienced gardeners, who, in turn, would be able to help thousands of home gardeners with Extension-directed information and advice.

Vermont Extension Vegetable Specialist Ted Flanagan, and Extension Agent Ed Bouton set up the initial guidelines.

"We recommended a series of 6 to 8 consecutive sessions for the course, lasting from 4 to 8 weeks," explains Flanagan. "The overall objectives were to give garden leaders and experienced gardeners a deeper understanding of soils and garden practices. The course would help them identify and solve gardening problems, and make available to them the expertise of Vermont and New Hampshire specialists."

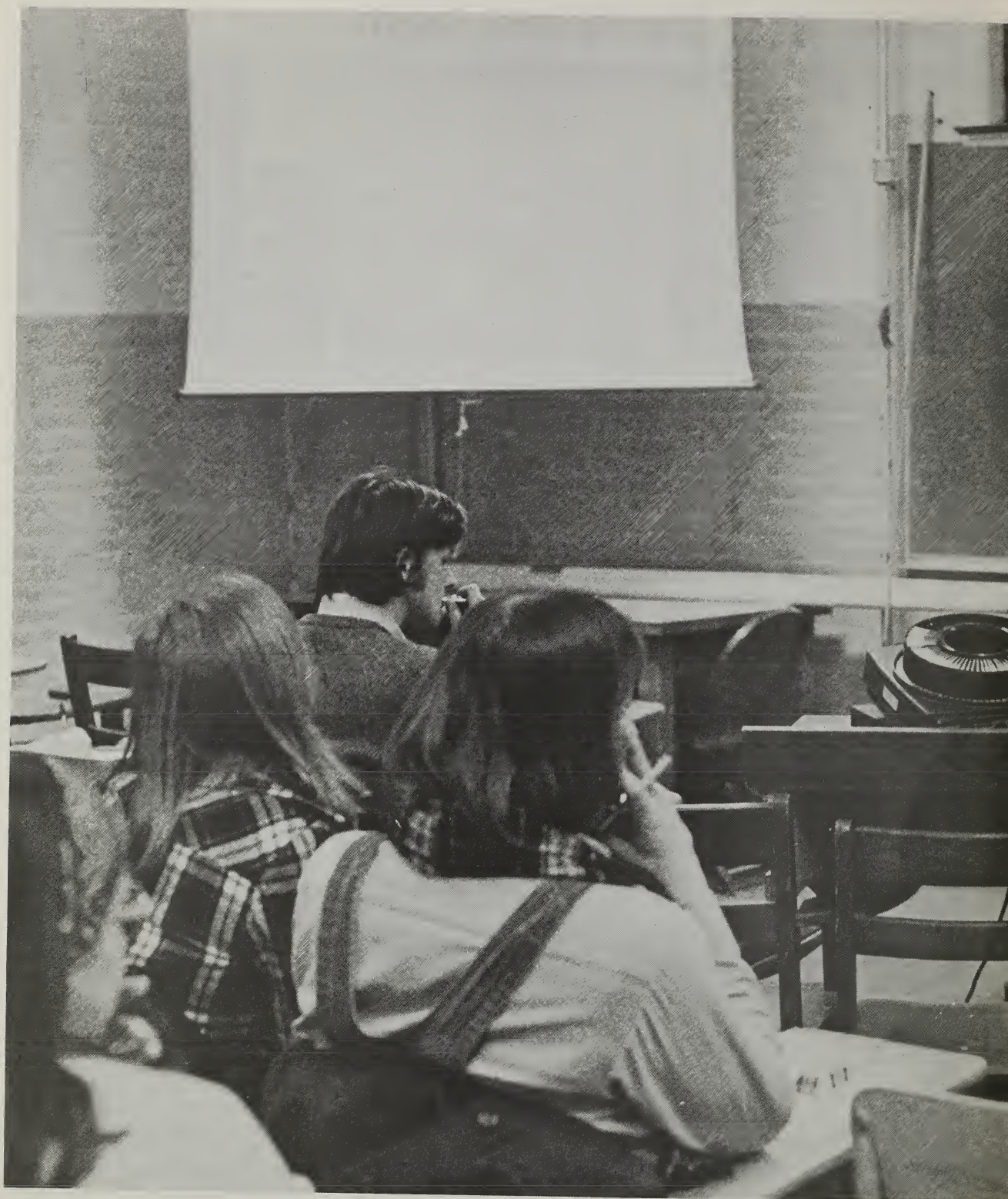
The course was divided into six units: planning and planting; soils and plant nutrition; plant diseases and control; insect problems and control; cultural practices; and pesticide use and safety.

The Extension garden specialists made 27 15-minute color videocassettes, produced in the Burlington studios. The cassettes were integrated into teaching units, with supplementary slides and reference material. A study guide was designed for the course leaders.



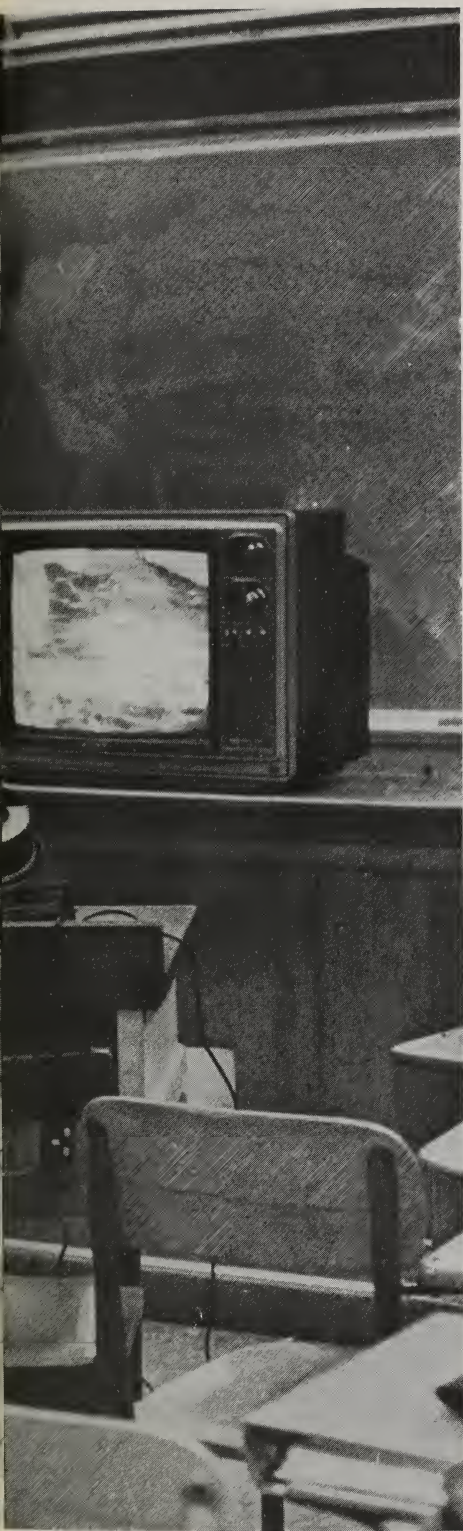
*Ted Flanagan and student William Tebo check copies of the videocassettes.*





*Participants in the Green Star Gardener course watch a videocassette on soil testing.*





The Green Star Gardener participants received a manual, including garden leaflets and brieflets, prepared by Vermont and New Hampshire specialists, plus materials from USDA and other states. The course fee was set at \$15, but was waived for participants who worked directly with Extension-sponsored garden projects.

Six teaching kits—cassettes included—were prepared for the agents and used in the 12 locations.

Parallel to the multimedia Green Star Gardener courses, two traditional courses were given, where individual subject-matter specialists appeared in person. The target audience was the same—garden leaders and experienced gardeners. The specialists covered the same subject matter as in the cassettes, and the local Extension agent served as coordinator. Identical pretests and post-tests were given to all participants.

Preliminary results of the evaluation indicate that the participants were highly in favor of the program; that cassettes were well accepted; that the learning process was about the same, whether they learned from cassettes, or attended a “live” presentation; and that the agent in charge was a very important component of the course.

Ed Bouton, Extension agent in eastern Vermont, took the Green Star Gardener program to three counties. He believes cassettes are an excellent teaching tool.

“However,” he emphasized, “it is important that the agent/teacher is completely familiar with the subject matter discussed in the cassettes. Supplementary visual material and time for questions and discussion are very important components of a successful course.”

The Green Star Gardener program is part of a 3-year Vermont-New Hampshire multimedia project, funded by Extension Service, USDA.

Designed by Vermont’s Associate Director Robert E. Honnold, it is aimed at incorporating new multimedia techniques into Extension education. One main component of the project is the production, use, and evaluation of videocassettes.

Honnold says, “We are looking at videocassettes as new resources for leader training, as well as educating the general public. Specialists and agents will reach a large audience with carefully structured programs that can be repeated and very easily revised and updated.

“In the Green Star Gardener program, the leaders we train will take Extension information to thousands of home gardeners. The leaders will also be able to use cassettes for meetings and individual instruction.”

This program is only a beginning, says Honnold. “Our next project is ready to go and includes a series of four programs on food preservation. Starting this summer, we will be planning the multimedia project for FY 1976-77, which concentrates on consumer education and consumers at the marketplace.”

After only 6 months on the road, the multimedia project has already opened up new avenues in Extension teaching. Cassettes are now available from other states in limited numbers. Many states indicate that the 3/4-inch color equipment is being used increasingly for inservice training and direct teaching.

Bouton and his colleague, Extension Agent Phil Grime, plan to use the cassettes over their local cable television system, with phone-in questions from the public. During the summer, gardening and food preservation cassettes will be featured at local fairs and in a shopping mall. And, starting this fall, Gordon Nielsen, pesticide coordinator, (Vt.), will be using a series of cassettes (produced by Oregon) in the Vermont pesticide applicator training program. □



# A "sure cure" for the reporter's blues

Maybe you majored in home economics or animal husbandry, but today you've got the "reporter blues."

The page looms blank in your typewriter... the hour is late... you're weary.

But you must write a news story about an irrigation project, do the public service announcements for a food preservation workshop, or work up copy for a TV slide series to promote a farm management workshop. In desperation you knock out a couple of paragraphs "to make do."

There is a BETTER and more professional approach.

The county agent can be relieved of journalism "chores" — photography, hours in the darkroom, the irksome soliloquies at the typewriter—when such become the responsibility of an Extension information representative in the county Extension office.

And with this "reassignment," the county Extension program can become stronger and more emphatic. Those hours once spent struggling over news stories and features can be used, instead, to plan and develop educational programs and demonstrations. These, in turn, become the basis for more news stories, features, radio and television programs.

I've seen this routine set in motion in the Lane County, Oregon, Extension

office where I've served as information representative for 21 years with the staff of Extension agents: currently, two in 4-H club work, two home economists, two horticultural agents, a forester, livestock

by  
Val Thoenig  
*Extension Information Representative  
Lane County Extension Service  
Oregon State University*



Val Thoenig, "sets up" a favorite subject—a 4-H'er and her project.



agent, field crops specialist, predator control agent, and the agents who coordinate the county's Expanded Food and Nutrition program.

In 1955 the position of information representative was originated as an experimental pilot project, when six county Extension agents convinced the county commissioners that an aggressive information program was essential to alert the thousands of newcomers to the county (more than 82 percent in the previous decade) to the opportunities in Extension education. They had the blessing of State Director Frank A. Ballard whose philosophies and goals for Extension remain widely recalled and quoted.

Wisely, the Extension agents and Ballard emphasized that professional training and experience were essential for the new job. Happily, my training and interests in journalism and people seemed made to order for that job.

The timing was right to start an Extension information program. Lane Extension Service was gearing up for a 10-year long-range planning program. The county was in the midst of change from a rural-oriented to metropolitan area, orchards were being uprooted, farm land gobbled up for new subdivisions. Homemakers were entering the job market. Families were facing new strains. Installment buying was setting new records; and consumerism was a relatively new word.

Even then in Lane County the stereotyped 4-H'er with a calf was outdated. Fewer than half of all 4-H club members came from homes on three or more acres; more than half were from suburban and city homes.

New programs, new audiences, a wider spectrum of challenges and responsibilities were opening up.

But the outlook was bright. Programs had a firm foundation of Oregon State Extension specialists and the strength of the county Extension agents behind them. A "framework" for the information program was ready-built—11 county newspapers, including a daily and

two biweeklies, 12 radio stations, 2 commercial television stations.

Those were the days of Lane Extension "mass meetings"—big productions for big groups, news headlines, picture pages. The spin-offs were gratifying. As people learned about Extension they enrolled their youngsters in 4-H club work, got involved in a home Extension program, participated in agriculture-related activities.

Annual "Red Hat Days" staged by the home Extension agents, Extension wildlife specialists, and local sportsmen attracted up to 1,400 people. Television monitors placed throughout the great Agricultural Building brought viewers close to demonstrations on the care of venison "from kill to kitchen."

Some 600 homemakers turned out for a "Suds and Duds" day to learn about detergents and new laundry equipment; a Christmas crafts fair had the fairground parking lot jammed, traffic snarled for seven blocks.

The Lane 4-H Fair became a solo production as parents and club leaders insisted that 4-H'ers be removed from the carnival atmosphere of the county fair, that "their" fair be a learning experience.

The Spring Lamb and Wool Show began as a cooperative venture between the Lane County Livestock Association and Lane Extension Service. To this day it remains a favorite rural-urban celebration for several thousand people.

These programs reflect what a small staff of agents can accomplish when given time to plan and develop, and when their efforts are backed by a professional information program.

Over the years rapport between Lane Extension and the media has grown stronger and mutual. No newspaper is too small or too insignificant to qualify for the Extension releases.

Stories are localized with pictures of Extension volunteer leaders, "hometown" 4-H'ers, and agriculturists putting Extension research into practice.

Many opportunities to be on television have made both TV studios familiar territory to many 4-H'ers, Extension leaders, and agents. Half-hour programs promoting the 4-H Fair and Lamb Show are 20-year "traditions."

If I were asked which media programs best illustrate the success of the Lane Extension information program, these would come out on top:

- Hour-long TV programs at prime time (7 p.m.) arranged so Extension could bring timely information to the public on subjects such as inflation control, food preservation, or what to do in case of a "deep" freeze or flood.

- Weekly half-hour TV program, *Creative Living* developed and produced by two Extension agents, televised on both commercial television stations. One station tapes the program, makes it available to the other.

- Weekly, 2-hour radio call-in Extension Forum program.

- Monthly, two half-hour week end televised programs as the Extension feature, *You and Your Community*. This, too, on commercial television. report including a color slide presentation on the *Agriculture-USA* program.

- Daily, radio noontime agricultural messages by agents.

In addition, we've had innumerable newscasts on radio and TV, color slide public service announcements on TV, and thousands of column inches in county, regional, and statewide publications. Recently, a New York City paper picked up an Extension information feature—a success story about the Expanded Food and Nutrition program that had been made available nationwide through the USDA feature service.

An information specialist at the county level can be an important asset to your Extension program. □



*Keith Zoellner, Max Deets, and Kenneth Fromm inspect the Solomon Valley Feedlot.*

## County capitalizes on cattle feedlot

by  
E. Lee Musil  
*Asst. Extension Editor, Agriculture  
Cooperative Extension Service  
Kansas State University*

Until 10 years ago, the cow-calf operators, backgrounders and farmer-feeders in Mitchell County were much the same as anywhere else in Kansas.

"We weren't capitalizing on our potential in cattle finishing," recalls Kenneth Fromm, Mitchell County Extension director. "Only a few farmers were finishing cattle in their small on-farm lots even though we

had the milo and cattle numbers to support a commercial feedlot."

Stringent federal water pollution controls added momentum to establishment of a commercial feedlot in the county. After several years of organizational efforts, the 17,500 capacity Solomon Valley Feedlot opened in 1970 under the ownership of farmers, bankers, and other businesses in Mitchell County. Since

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then, the county has doubled its number of cattle on feed and provided a lucrative market for feedgrain and forage production.

Profits from the enterprise are returned to a broad spectrum of investors. Since the feedlot generates \$5 for every \$1 spent, it contributes significantly to the county's economic health.

The Kansas State University (KSU) Extension Service was a major contributor to the formation of the feeding corporation. Fromm, as local Extension agent, acted as a catalyst and educator. He asked KSU Extension specialists to conduct a feasibility study, speak at organizational meetings, arrange tours of 15 western Kansas feedlots and help design the lot construction.

"It was difficult to organize and raise enough capital to get the project underway, but we finally did it," explains Richard Vetter, a rural Beloit stockman who was the corporation's first president. "If we hadn't built a feedlot here we would have been feeding cattle somewhere else. Now we're using the products (cattle and milo) produced here in the county."

"Establishment of the feedlot was a combination of progressive credit institutions, Extension workers, and farmers, and the hiring of a topnotch feedlot manager," Vetter says. "And if the livestock producers hadn't been behind it, there was no use putting it in."

Solomon Valley Feedlot is unique in many respects. First, it is not owned by one or two cattle barons but by many stockmen. Fewer than 25 percent of the stockholders are non-farmers. "This has provided stability to the lot," says Dean Haddock, president of a local bank and one of the original backers. "There's a lot of know-how collectively among the stockholders."

There have been few investment feeders; 56 percent of the cattle being fed are owned by county residents, and 75 to 80 percent are farm and ranch owned. Solomon Valley Feedlot's working capacity ranges from 14,500 to 15,500 head, for an

annual turnover of 36,000. It is one of few feedlots in the state to feed micronized (popped) milo, the predominant feedgrain of north central Kansas. Each day cattle in the lot consume 5,000 bushels of milo, 50 tons of silage, 5 tons of alfalfa and 7 tons of protein supplement.

Cash flow has been excellent. Even during the 2 years of depressed cattle prices, the lot did not lose money.

The impact of the feedlot's progressive ownership extends beyond the borders of Mitchell County. The Kansas Bull Test Station, sponsored jointly by the KSU Extension Service and the Kansas Livestock Association, is located at the feedlot and is making a significant contribution to the beef cattle industry in the state.

Established in 1970, the station tests 400 to 500 bulls each year. Its purpose is to compare the genetic gain and conformation of bulls and sires, promote herd improvement with performance-tested bulls, and encourage and assist performance-testing and recordkeeping as ways to more efficient beef production.

"Testing does not improve the bulls; it merely helps identify the superior ones," explained Keith Zoellner, KSU Extension beef specialist who supervises the tests. "On-farm testing is another tool in selection of better cattle. A breeder entering the test can compare his bulls with others under a common environment. By upgrading the bull quality, the end product is better cattle in Kansas. That is the primary reason for testing."

Besides showing average daily gain, the test includes ultrasonic rib-eye measurements to identify the bulls that produce the most red meat and muscling.

"The bull test station gives us ex-

posure to a segment of the cattle industry where we have prospective customers," manager Max Deets explains. "We're interested in the educational aspects because we want to encourage superior feeding stock."

Deets would like to see more retained ownership of cattle in the lot—cattle belonging to either the cow-calf operator or backgrounder. "We prefer to do business with beef producers instead of speculators," he said. "Retained ownership adds stability to the lot. Of course, we have to accept lighter weight cattle."

To promote retained ownership, the feedlot, a bank, and Extension are sponsoring a Commercial Cattle Improvement Program (CCIP). Area cowmen are encouraged to place 5 to 10 percent of their steer calf crops in a feeding trial at the feedlot to obtain average daily gain, carcass traits, yield grade and quality grades. Information from the "futura" tells producers where their herd needs improvement.

"Last year's feeding trial showed that if a cowman had genetically superior calves, it was worth \$96.84 to him to keep his calves and put them in the feedlot rather than sell them as stockers," reports KSU's Zoellner. "The producer of top quality calves who lets the feeder have them at average market value is not getting a fair deal. He should be retaining his ownership."

After 1 year of testing, the CCIP revealed that as average daily gain went up, so did net profit. The percentage calf crop is 20 times more influential in determining net profit than any other factor measured.

CCIP encourages cowmen to set production goals, stresses the importance of weaning a high percentage of the calf crops, and urges the purchase of bulls to meet those production goals. □



# When youth garden—the community smiles

by  
Carmen R. Walgrave  
Whiteside County Extension  
Advisor, Home Economics  
Cooperative Extension Service  
University of Illinois

Community support of the Expanded Food and Nutrition youth garden project is alive and growing in Whiteside County, Illinois. Forty organizations and individuals have donated time, money, and garden supplies in the 5-year history of the program.

The garden project began in 1971 with only five gallon buckets—each sprouting either a tomato or pepper plant. Over the years it has grown to four sites where more than a hundred children each has a garden. During these 5 years, 580 young people have grown gardens assisted by 123 adult and older teen volunteers.

The project also provided an opportunity for leadership development; taught several hundred children about foods, nutrition and gardening; and put food on the table in the homes of many low-income families.

Individuals and industries provide the land for the sites. Two are limited to the space available in the community, but the other two garden sites have unlimited acreage depending on the turnout of youth from that area each spring.

With today's large farm equipment, the job of getting garden sites tilled in a residential area is difficult. But farmers working adjoining land or men with small garden tractors and disks donate their time and equipment each year. Local



*Isabelle Silguero and Doug McHale put a lot of effort into getting the garden soil ready for planting.*

businesses contribute seeds and plants—a significant gift and in some cases a sacrifice on their part.

Planting day is an exciting time for everyone involved. Many youngsters at each garden site have never dug a row, planted a seed, or held a hoe or rake. With patience and lots of volunteer help, they plan

their gardens—each a small area clustered to form the community garden.

Rainy weather teaches perseverance to see who wins, the youth or the weeds. Dry weather teaches discipline as youth carry water in plastic jugs, cans, and buckets to nurture along their

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plants.

Children are encouraged to plant radishes, lettuce, peas or some other early bearing vegetable, another vegetable that comes on in mid-summer, and tomato and pepper plants that provide a late summer incentive to keep at the job. Vegetables are harvested at weekly garden

of squash, cucumbers, etc., they pick them and take them to the housing for elderly and give their vegetables to the residents.

Vandalism hit two of the garden sites, causing a great deal of damage. Squash and cucumbers were pulled out and many plants uprooted. City police talked to the gardeners and

their gardens can attend the White Eagle 4-H Camp, approximately 45 miles from the community for overnight camping. Ten organizations contribute to the cost of this camp.

The campers have organized recreational activities, free time, a time to swim, and in small groups to prepare all their own meals. Many adult volunteers, including parents, help direct camp activities. A local bus company provides transportation and the licensed bus driver for the company donates his time and is also camp counselor while he's at the campsite.

The program assistants are a big asset to the garden project; at the end of each season they evaluate each garden. One assistant said that while the youth were cleaning up the garden in September, several new boys asked if they could have a garden next year. Also, all of the experienced gardeners wanted to be a part of next year's project.

Another program assistant mentioned that interest grew throughout the season instead of waning. She started out the summer with four youngsters and ended with twelve. Still another classified her garden workers as "good", "better", and "best". Her pride in their work showed. She also mentioned in her evaluation how she enjoyed working with the parents of the youth.

The real jewels, however, were the quotes from the youth themselves: "This was the first time I planted a garden. Taught me more about agriculture and was fun to meet different people."

"Things would have been better about the garden if somebody wouldn't of ruined my row."

"It was fun planting seed, but not picking weeds."

"I liked it because I like working outdoors."

Since 1975 the garden clubs have continued through the winter months as 4-H clubs electing officers, giving demonstrations, learning about nutrition, and preparing for the next year's garden.

Gardening is fun when the entire community smiles. □



*Juan Rega grins over his first garden—a tomato plant in a five-gallon bucket.*

meetings and in between by family members. The produce is taken home for the family.

Vegetables requiring lots of growing space are put together in a community garden at each site. All youngsters work to take care of this area. They can take the produce home and in cases of an abundance

helped them learn from the experience. One of the boys, seeing that every hill of sweet corn had been cut off, said to the program assistant, "Now I think I know how people feel when teenagers throw a rock through a window."

All youth who attend garden meetings regularly and take care of





*Children in the child-parent-community program learn about nutrition at day camp.*



# "Nobody ever cared" until now

by  
Elynor Williams  
*Extension Communication Specialist  
Agricultural Extension Service  
North Carolina A&T State University*

Operating from the 1890 institution of A&T State University, a series of programs is blooming in Greensboro, North Carolina, reaching citizens who have not been traditionally exposed to Extension.

These programs are assisting city dwellers, low-income farmers and restless urban youth in their quest for a more livable environment and a satisfying life.

"In developing the Extension component at A&T," said Assistant Director R. E. Jones, "we have attempted to capitalize on all the resources made available to us from both the land-grant institutions—North Carolina A&T and North Carolina State and from the communities we serve."

Extensive staffing in the areas of family living, agriculture, community development, and 4-H and other youth activities was done over a 3-year period with specialists, agents, and paraprofessionals in 19 counties bringing educational opportunities to several thousand black, white, and Indian families.

The family living department zeros in on urban family needs in many ways. Agents help young girls and boys discover the joys and savings of sewing their own clothes, and young married couples develop skills in child rearing.

Sometimes results are dramatic—as when a program assistant in food and nutrition assists an overweight homemaker to lose 90 pounds through meal planning and diet control.

Often though, the rewards can't

be measured—as when a teenager beams at the close of a child care workshop, confident that she will now be able to make some extra money babysitting.

Cooperating with the local Drug Action Council, the Extension resource management department offered ex-drug offenders classes in money management. One man expressed his satisfaction with the course by saying, "now, I'll be able to be more successful in planning and using my funds."

Youth activities at A&T cover a broad area with special emphasis on children 6-19 years old. The child-parent-community program, a special needs project, provides an innovative approach to the social growth and development of 6-8 year olds. Educational enrichment and creative experiences in art, music, communications, and practical skills highlight weekly sessions for children in 10 participating communities. Tours and trips are also used, to illustrate and enhance lessons.

Parents contribute to the program at monthly discussion sessions that emphasize information enabling them to help their children in reaching their fullest potential. For example, discussions center on the importance of play to the growth of a child, or how to keep the communication channels open between parent and child.

Involvement of older youth is the focus of 4-H in the city. This program provides sound educational experiences to help 9-19 year olds in personal development, citizenship, leadership, environmental awareness, scientific exploration, and leisure education.

Special interest classes open up a "world of possibilities" to urban youth in such subjects as gun safety, first aid, city government, and career

exploration. Programs in bowling, softball, and camping assist these young people in coping with increased leisure time.

With a growing concern for the decay of our cities, the Extension community resource development department is helping organize community members into problem-solving groups. Many communities are now beginning to alleviate some of the conditions causing problems in their environment.

For example, in one community few services and facilities usually available to city residents existed. Within a 6-month period, an Extension-organized community group developed petitions for water, sewer, and street paving which the city council passed unanimously. This activity alone touched the lives of nearly 500 families.

The plight of the small, low-income farmer is also a concern of the Extension Service at A&T. Through the farm opportunities program, they are receiving information and technical assistance in agricultural technology and management.

Agricultural technicians or paraprofessionals work on an individual basis with these low-income farmers to help increase their incomes from all sources; use of farm technology and managerial techniques; knowledge and use of public agencies; participation in community agencies; and appreciation and skill in setting and working for achievable family goals.

To date, some 600 farm cooperators are benefitting from the program in its operation through 19 of the 100 counties in North Carolina. Net incomes from farming have increased more than 30 percent since the program began. One farmer remarked to a visiting technician, "I've been farming this same farm 16 years, and nobody ever cared about me to help in any of my problems over the years until now."

These remarks, in a sense, sum up what the Extension Service at A&T State University is trying to do — help people to help themselves. □

# Aides handle hoes against inflation

by  
Marjorie P. Groves  
*Assistant Extension Editor  
Cooperative Extension Service  
Iowa State University*

Hard to believe something as peaceful and natural as a garden could be part of a war effort. But, when garden and food preservation aides marched out of Extension offices across Iowa last summer, they sought recruits to battle inflation, recession, and the effects of rising unemployment.

These 35 paraprofessional aides were hired from planting through harvest season as a way to meet food and budget problems of unemployed or low-income families in 28 Iowa counties. They came to Extension



Amie Cole, center, a garden and food preservation aide in Fort Dodge, Iowa, helps a homemaker and her mother learn to can carrots. For Donna, right, last summer's garden was her first.



with experience in gardening and food preservation, so that they needed only occasional updates from Extension home economists (EHE's), county Extension directors, or horticulture specialists.

One aide, Carol Barr, began handling the hoe for Fayette County in April. Railroad administrators supplied her with the lists of local folks to be laid off, so that she could start visiting them immediately with tips on food budget stretching.

Barr had gardened for years on a small acreage to keep her family well fed. She could identify easily with the families she visited; her own husband was laid off before she finished her stint with Extension.

The garden and food preservation aides located families wanting help not only through existing Extension Service programs and other agencies, but also on their own. Dan Burkhart, Fayette County Extension director, said Barr would drive into town, park her car, and walk down the sidewalk looking for gardens. Then she'd stop and introduce herself.

Cindy Fields and Claudia Wanet, Cerro Gordo County aides, visited every town in the county to offer advice or hold workshops. "We'd take our hoes, wear our grubbies, and work right along with people. All the time we'd be chatting about insects they could expect or how often to water," said Fields.

"In training we tried to emphasize simple vegetable culture, things that wouldn't fail and use of basic tools. A rake, hoe, and shovel are all that were needed," explained Hank Taber, Extension horticulturist.

The garden aides found time to work with some audiences fairly new to Extension. Fields and Wanet worked with Migrant Action on a community garden of 89 plots especially for migrant families.

Another client required some special help. She was blind, but wanted to learn to can for the first time. Aide Kathe Cook, Clarke County, explained that they used a pressure canner with an automatic pressure gauge that makes a sound.

"She cold-packed the food, eliminating the chance of getting burned pouring hot water in the jars. We marked her timer for the correct processing time. She eventually was able to do the canning alone although her husband stays nearby to make sure no accidents occur," Cook continued.

The aides learned a lot about people, too. In Black Hawk County they stressed the importance of having community or group gardens within walking distance of all the gardeners.

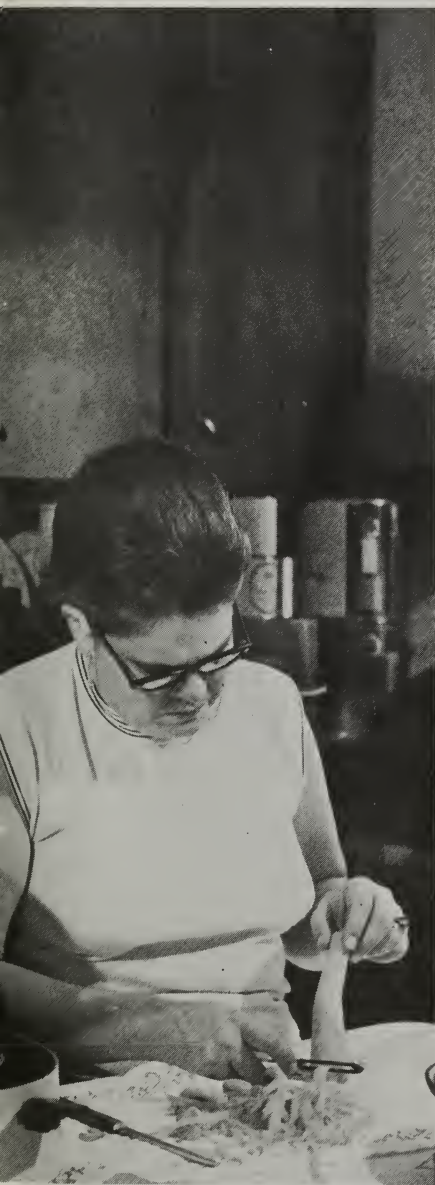
Barr held gardening workshops seated on a picnic table in the parks. She publicized the times when she'd be available to take calls and to help people identify a garden pest or weed. (The unidentifiable ones were sent to the plant disease lab at Iowa State University, Ames.)

Aides around the state stretched their imaginations to get gardening and food preservation tips out. A TV station gave one aide a spot to fill at the end of the regular newscast. Others fielded questions on radio call-in shows.

Two aides covered special smocks with a vegetable design so they'd be recognizable wherever they went. Fields assumed the pen name "Edie Eggplant" for a column in the Mason City *Globe Gazette*. Aides in the Creston Extension area put up canning and freezing displays in store windows. In southern Iowa aides also set up tables in grocery stores to test pressure canners while homemakers shopped.

Other counties held clinics where women made appointments to bring their canners in for checking. "This really paid off," said Fayette EHE Patty Dillon. "We checked 30 canners. Only one was completely correct. In fact, one nearly blew up while we were checking it." A Ringgold County clinic tested 82 canners and reported most were in good working condition.

And work they did! Aides like Iona Hansen of Sioux City saw homemakers they had assisted store away 100 or more quarts of vegetables by the time their gardens stopped producing. □





# Saving energy safely with wood

*It may be a hot day in July when you read this, but you'll need time to plan ahead if you'd like to try a similar educational program during the coming winter.*

by  
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Field Coordinator and  
Extension Agent  
New London County  
College of Agriculture and  
Natural Resources  
University of Connecticut

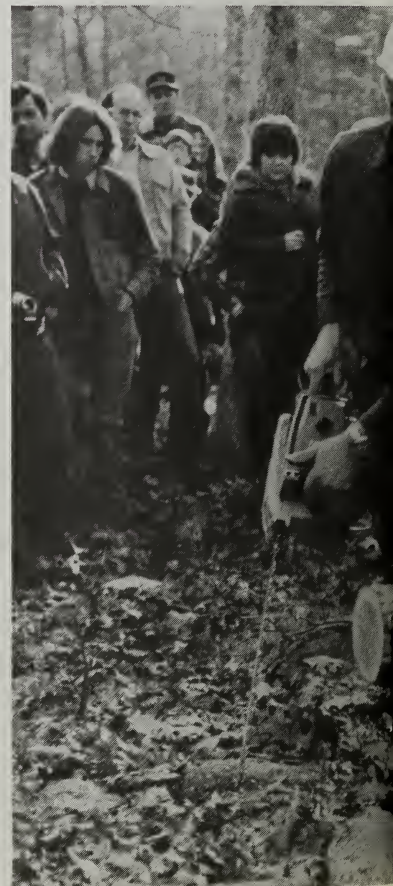
More than 2,000 people in eastern Connecticut, anxious to discover how to conserve energy, turned out on a Saturday last December, for a Wood Burning and Safety Field Day. It was sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service in eastern Connecticut and Region 4 Forestry Division of the Connecticut Department of Environmental

Protection.

Overflow crowds had attended evening meetings earlier in the fall at the Extension centers in Windham and New London counties to learn about choosing a wood stove. They wanted followup programs and more information. Those attending also requested information on the safe use and maintenance of chain saws,



*Using a mechanical screw-type safety wood splitter.*



*Preparing log to cut with chain saw.*



on how to cut down and limb out a tree, which trees to cut and which to leave, and what species of trees give off the most heat as fuel.

The regional forester could best answer many of these questions. I met with Peter Merrill, regional forester, to decide how to meet the needs of this new audience concerned with wood burning. We decided to conduct a field day, with exhibits and demonstrations covering all aspects of using wood as a source of energy. Safety was a major emphasis.

We agreed that an ideal site for the field day would be Region 4 Forest Headquarters in Voluntown, Connecticut. A large garage-type

building with five deep bays provided a covered area for exhibits and demonstrations. The adjacent woodland provided an excellent area for demonstrating felling trees and timber selection practices.

Each exhibitor paid a \$5 fee; this money was used for running box ads in the local newspapers. Papers also ran feature stories and five local stations made free radio announcements. The publicity was excellent.

The program featured exhibits of chain saws, wood stoves, wood splitters, and smoke detecting devices. For comparison, there was a cord of wood stacked, a cord cut up, and a pickup load of wood. Several common species of trees with B.T.U.

(British Thermal Unit) values were exhibited. An Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) exhibit provided an opportunity for woodland owners to sign up in forestry-related programs. The Extension Service staffed an exhibit of bulletins related to field day subjects.

A demonstration area that accommodated 75 people was set up in one of the garage bays. Three agricultural engineers from the University of Connecticut gave presentations on choosing a stove, and on principles of heating and safety devices in the home. A Christmas tree safety demonstration was also timely. One of the chain saw companies provided an excellent film on chain saw safety.

All demonstrations and talks were arranged in rotation. This meant that as soon as 75 people filled the area, allowing for short breaks between presentations, a new demonstration would begin. All demonstrations were repeated three times during the day.

Outside were demonstrations of wood splitters, chain saws and sharpening chain saws.

As soon as a group of about 75 people had seen the exhibits and demonstrations, Extension agents and Soil Conservation Service workers acted as guides and led the group to the forestry demonstration area about a quarter of a mile away where foresters demonstrated felling trees and cutting practices.

The field day turned out to be a family affair with picnic atmosphere, on an ideal Indian summer day. A local church sold beverages and sandwiches.

Reactions to the wood safety field day were enthusiastic. A number of people phoned the Extension Center after the event, expressing disappointment at not being able to attend. They'd heard good reports about the field day and wanted to know when the next one would be held. The editor of the local *Norwich Bulletin* wrote, "The field day was a huge success, hope you plan to make it a yearly event." □



2007  
Agricultural

## Ag service centers —one stop for assistance

Does the one-stop ag service center—the all-in-one home for USDA agencies on the local level—offer any advantages to county Extension offices?

George Schwartz, Stevens County, Minnesota, Extension director, answers this question with an emphatic “yes”.

“The new ag service centers are the wave of the future,” said Schwartz, when his county Extension office joined forces with four other local USDA offices last spring in such a center.

“A one-stop center offers you up-to-date, modern facilities with accessible, no-meter parking, plus closer proximity and better working relationships with other agencies. The centers create more traffic for Extension and attract more people to our programs,” he added.

Stevens County gained approval from the USDA to build the service center at Morris in February 1975. It is the first county center in Minnesota to be housed in entirely new facilities. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in August 1975, and the agencies moved into their new home in March 1976.

Along with the Extension Service, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), and the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), are housed in the center.

Schwartz believes cross-agency cooperation is a big factor in the success of the Morris center: “The give-and-take among all the agencies, their respective committees, and the county commissioners makes this place go,” he said. “We’re all working for a common goal—to meet the needs of the people in Stevens County.”

William Dorsey, district Extension director located in Stevens County is also an advocate of the ag service center concept. “This sharing of resources has not only helped strengthen our budget, but has also had a direct impact on the quality of our programs since the center became operational,” he said.

Local people like the new service center at Morris, too. Harold Luthi, a Stevens County farmer, said, “I’m more than pleased with the services offered by the new center. Today I had business with three agencies—I checked on irrigation with the Extension Service, received a commodity loan from ASCS, and ordered some trees from SCS. Having all offices under one roof saves time.”

Another farmer, Elmer Wendt, put it this way: “Appreciate the fact that all agencies are together, and I can take care of all my farm business in one stop.”

Through a trade-off agreement among the five agencies, ASCS provides a centralized receptionist-reference service and office equipment. Extension is responsible for





*Here's the team that makes the ag service center at Morris go: center, Diane Zeigler, Extension home economist, and George Schwartz, Extension agent; left, Clarence Haberer, FCIC, and Dean Paulson, ASCS; right, John Mall, SCS, and Randall Grimm, FmHA.*

furnishing the meeting room with furniture and visual equipment, and for snow removal. FmHA purchases all supplies; SCS provides janitorial services; and FCIC the backup receptionist. During peak periods the agencies also trade off support staff.

The support staff at Morris quickly learned the basic programs of all the agencies to better answer questions and to direct people to the right office.

The Morris center meeting room is a special feature found in all ag service centers. It was built to hold

the many educational meetings that are an integral part of the Extension program at the local level.

The Morris center meeting room is a special feature found in all ag service centers. It was built to hold the many educational meetings that are an integral part of the Extension program at the local level.

By July, almost 700 ag centers will be operational. Extension is co-located (either in the center or in the same building as the center) in 35 percent of these. Present plans call for 900 centers to be operating by the end of the year. □



## people and programs in review

### Extension staff honored by USDA

On May 25, 1976, 11 Extension staff members and a Community Extension team received one of the Department's highest honors—the superior service award.

Cited for the valuable contributions to Extension made through their various programs were: *James L. Adams*, county director, Golden, Colo.; *Tee Roy Betton*, Extension specialist, special programs, Little Rock, Ark.; *Peter Bieri*, university Extension resource agent, Whitehall, Wisc.; *Richard C. Bornholdt*, cooperative Extension agent, Montour Falls, N.Y.; *Elsie Fetterman*, specialist, family economics and management, Storrs, Conn.; *Alberta B. Johnston*, area supervisor, Portland, Ore.; *Bruce A. McKenzie*, Extension agricultural engineer, West Lafayette, Ind.; *John C. Miller*, Extension meats specialist, Caldwell, Idaho; *Richard L. Norton*, cooperative Extension fruit specialist, Rochester, N.Y.; *Robert R. Pinches*, program leader, 4-H Youth, Washington, D.C.; and *Virginia I. Zirkle*, county Extension agent, Ottawa, Ohio.

Receiving the award for the Cerro Gordo Isolated Community Extension Team from Aguada, Puerto Rico, was *Efrain Figueroa-Perez*, Extension agricultural agent and head of the unit. Team members include: *Yolanda Rivera de Sanchez*, *Miriam Acevedo-Acevedo*, *Gloria Ramos de Alers*, and *Israel Crespo-Torres*.

### Tate chosen young executive

Thomas G. Tate, program analysis officer, ES-USDA, has been named to USDA's Young Executive Committee (YEC). Each year agencies nominate 20 women and men under age 35, who show potential for future growth. Joel Soobitsky and Sue Benedetti, both of the ES-USDA 4-H staff, represented Extension on past YEC groups.

### Soybean problems featured in new slide set

A new color slide series, "Soybean Problems," prepared by the Cooperative Extension Service, University of Illinois with special ES-USDA funding is now available for \$25.60. Send to the Vocational Agriculture Service, University of Illinois, 434 Mumford Hall, Urbana, Ill. 61850. The slides show many insect, disease and herbicide injuries and other problems that interfere with normal growth of the soybean plant.

### Back to school rewarding if students help plan

Going back to school can be rewarding, especially if the students get a chance to help plan their own training. C. M. Skillington, Elk County, Pennsylvania, Extension director, believes local government leadership training seminars are successful because participants become involved in decisions about the subject matter content of the seminars. He and CRD Agent George Keener (recently retired) laid the groundwork for the successful program planning committee approach.

Registration for the last three yearly seminars averaged 80 persons, including appointed and elected officials and concerned citizens. About 99 percent of those taking part in the series felt the seminars sharpened their information about, and understanding of, local government issues.